

12. (once amended) A calendaring system providing a generic matching service which utilizes a first calendar event to represent matching data, as per claim 11, wherein said notification is performed via adding entities associated in said match to said first calendar event.

99 13. (once amended) A calendaring system providing a generic matching service which utilizes a first calendar event to represent matching data, as per claim 11, wherein said relations are represented by one or more categories, and said categories of match data are capable of being represented by said first calendar event.

210 19. (once amended) A method of providing a generic matching service utilizing an electronic calendar system, as per claim 17, said method further comprising:
notifying said entities associated upon said matching via adding said entities to said calendar event.

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Examiner's Office Action dated 8/29/2002. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the remarks that follow.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-22 are pending.

Claims 1-4, 6, 9-13, and 15-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Bisdikian et al. (USP 5,974,406).

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bisdikian et al.

Claims 5 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bisdikian et al. in view of Durand et al. (USP 6,272,467).

In the Claims

The claims have been amended to more clearly define the present invention. In this regard, the claims have specifically been amended to comport their language with that of the written description so as to facilitate an easier reading of the claims.

OVERVIEW OF CLAIMED INVENTION

The presently claimed invention integrates both the time scheduling capabilities of a calendar system and the efficient matching functions of pairing services into one application that is powerful for many users, organizations and types of services. By integrating a calendar system with a matching service, the capabilities of the calendaring system will not only match an entity's similar interests or needs, but also provide a matching of activities according to time. This not only allows an entity to locate other entities who would be interested in a particular activity, but also allows an entity to locate other entities who can participate in the activity at particular times. Another advantage of the present invention is that it is of greater convenience to the entity to create a calendar event, rather than filling out, for instance, a separate application in which an entity does not remain anonymous. By easing the process of requesting a match operation, entries into the system are more readily made. Applications of this method include

personal matching (such as a dating service), extracurricular activities, commerce-based activities, and job positions and/or qualifications.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The examiner has rejected claims 1-4, 6, 9-13, and 15-22 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,974,406 (Bisdikian et al.), hereafter Bisdikian.

Bisdikian discloses a method and apparatus for providing customized notification in response to a search query. A user creates a search profile in order to be assigned a personal I.D. that the matching service uses for its search, including information such as a user's name, password preference, contact information, and credit card account, as well as information that is related to the item that is to be searched for. A matching engine searches resource databases, and, after a match is found, a response to the search query is then delivered to the notification system. The notification system then identifies the involved parties related to the request, and, according to the choices specified in a user's profile, notifies a user by way of a user-specified device (e.g. telephone, fax, e-mail) at a user-specified time (e.g. after 6:00 p.m.). If desired, the user may schedule a request to obtain contact dates and times from the parties' scheduling choices in order to be notified of possible correlating dates and times in the two parties schedules.

Bisdikian fails to disclose when an event is to occur (the timing of an event) as a part of the search criteria. Rather, the process disclosed in Bisdikian is a two-step process, with the time or period ("when") used only as a secondary consideration after the matching process. As stated above, the user must optionally choose, should he desire, whether the scheduling process should take place. This is not a consideration when searching a request for a match. Since the presently

claimed invention identifies the scheduling of an event to be a criteria for the matching process, Bisdikian does not anticipate the present invention.

The present invention's goal is to integrate a calendar system with a matching service, therefore allowing a user not only to identify a match of similar interests or needs, but also to allow a user to locate other entities or parties who can participate in the match interest or need at a particular time. In the present invention an identifying search criteria is to be when an activity or event is to occur. That is, the user specifies a time, date, or time period, for example, for which an activity or similar search request is to take place in order to locate a match. Bisdikian discloses that, if requested by the user in the user's profile, a system can obtain contact dates and times conducive to the parties identified by a matching engine in order to inform the matched parties of possible meetings. That is, only if a user desires to, he may provide his calendar information in his profile so that he can request an event or match to be scheduled.

The present invention notifies entities associated upon the match of calendar events by way of a notifying element. That is, when two entities have a specific calendar event or time match, a match is determined and the entities are identified of the match. The entities or users of a match as disclosed in Bisdikian are notified of a match according to the personal profiles that the user creates, and not according to their schedules. According to Bisdikian, a user may request that after a match is identified that the users' schedules be compared in order to possibly add the event to their schedules. However, the present invention considers the comparison of the users' schedules in order to determine a match.

As disclosed in the amended claims, the present invention considers match data that comprises when an event is to occur and one or more relations, such as where, what, minimum matching requirements, or attributes. The present invention further categorizes these relations in

order to simply the matching process. The categories may include, for example, personal matching or commerce activity. The examiner states the example given in the Bisdikian patent includes buying and selling cars, but that the patent is directly applicable to many categories. However, Bisdikian fails to teach that these activities take place at a certain time or time period.

The examiner states that Bisdikian discloses and anticipates a system for anonymously matching entities using an electronic calendaring system. However, the present invention allows a user to add an "event," for example, according to when, where, and a related category without requesting a user's name or similar personal information. Bisdikian does not disclose the use of anonymous entities, as Bisdikian discloses that a profile must be developed and a user I.D. assigned in order for a user to take part in a matching request.

The examiner states that computer storage and a match server are used in the matching process of Bisdikian based upon the retention of one or more calendar events. However, Bisdikian does not teach that calendar events are a part of the search criteria for a match. The identification of possible dates and times for an event to take place are scheduled after a match has occurred and is separate from the matching steps. Additionally, scheduling takes place should a user or party place the request for the system to do so, whereas the present invention focuses on matching an entity via a particular time or period.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The examiner has rejected claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bisdikian. The examiner states that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have Bisdikian's system select a match within a multiplicity to times at the most favorable price or rate as it increases customer confidence in using the

matching system. However, the present invention discloses a system that matches similar interests or needs of a user based on the time or time period of those interests or needs. Commerce-based activities such as variable pricing upon specific time period(s) may be of interest to a user. Furthermore, the user may select the most favorable price or rate during the time or time periods specified. Bisdikian does not teach the location of a match based on the requested time period of when an event is to occur. Moreover, Bisdikian does not disclose nor teach the use of a multiplicity of times as a search criteria for commerce activity to take place so that the user can select a most favorable price or rate.

The examiner has rejected claims 5 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bisdikian in view of U.S. Patent 6,272,467 (Durand et al.), hereafter Durand. Durand discloses an automated method for identifying matches between a set of traits and preferences to find compatible matches for residency programs, employment opportunities, and personal relationships. The present invention discloses a system that matches similar interests or needs of a user based on the time or time period of those interests or needs. Durand does not disclose a time, time period, or when an event is to occur as a search criteria. As stated above, Bisdikian fails to disclose the time or time period as a search criteria.

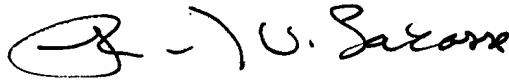
Summary:

As has been detailed above, none of the references, cited or applied, provide for the specific claimed details of applicants' presently claimed invention, nor renders them obvious. It is believed that this case is in condition for allowance and reconsideration thereof and early issuance is respectfully requested.

As this amendment has been timely filed within the set period of response, no petition for extension of time or associated fee is required. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies in the fees provided to Deposit Account No. 09-0441.

If it is felt that an interview would expedite prosecution of this application, please do not hesitate to contact applicants' representative at the below number.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy W. Lacasse". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "R" and a cursive "Lacasse".

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November 27, 2002